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SOCIAL SCIENCES

PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL

APRIL 1958

75 CENTS

**IF NAMED FAVORITE IN 6 ON LEFT HAND PAGE, CONTINUE.
ALL OTHERS (NO ONE FAVORITE) SKIP TO 13.**

12. Let's say you are going to take a trip by plane. You want to leave at a certain time. (Favorite airline in 6), the airline you prefer, has a flight leaving two hours later than when you want to go. Another major airline has a flight similar to your favorite airline's but leaving exactly when you want to go. Of course you might not always do the same thing, but in general what would you probably do—take the other flight at the exact time you wanted to go or wait two hours for the airline you prefer?

Take flight when wanted to go.....	49-1
Wait for favorite airline.....	2
Depends (volunteered)	3
Don't know	4

13. (For each airline named in 11—"Ever flown") Have you flown on (each airline named in 11)—just once, 2 or 3 times, or more often than that? (RECORD ABOVE IN Q. 13 COLUMNS)

14. About how long ago was it when you last flew on any of these commercial airlines?

Within last 6 months.....	50-1	(READ INSTRUCTION BEFORE 15)
6 months to a year.....	2	
One year to 2 years.....	3	
2-5 years.....	4	
5 years or more.....	5	(SKIP TO 20)
Don't know	6	

INSTRUCTION: CHECK BACK TO QUESTION 11 TO FIND AIRLINES "EVER FLOWN". CIRCLE EACH AIRLINE LISTED IN QUESTION 15 RECORDING SPACE BELOW IF IT WAS "EVER FLOWN" IN 11. FOR EACH AIRLINE CIRCLED, ASK 15. IF NONE CIRCLED, SKIP TO 16.

15. About how long ago did you fly (each airline circled below)—was it within the last year, the last 3 years, or was it more than 3 years ago? (RECORD BELOW)

	Within last year	Last 3 years	More than 3 years	Don't know
American	51-1			
Capital	5			
Continental	9			
Eastern	52-1			
Northwest	5			
TWA	9			
United	53-1			
Western	5	6	7	8

16. Taking into consideration all the flying you have done, about how many of all the trips you have made by air would you

ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

—Four Articles

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nature
to them...



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A JOURNAL OF OPINION IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

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Editorial

SOME ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

● The present issue of the JOURNAL contains several articles related to research, a subject of growing interest to public relations practitioners. The inclusion of these articles (as well as previously published essays on the subject) results from the idea that Stuart Chase was right when he remarked some years ago that this sort of social research—attitude research, opinion research, market research—comes about as close to scientific method as anything we have in the area of human communications.

One of the articles, by Burns Roper, is concerned with the problem of measurement. How can we tell, either in advance or after the fact, anything about the effectiveness and impact of a public relations action?

A second article, by Dr. Gerhart Wiebe, deals with the complex problem of the "perceptual context," the dilemma offered by an audience which may not understand us at all because we are not talking in the same terms at all.

The article from Copenhagen is a different sort of thing and is primarily an example of "reportage" based on carefully-designed depth interviews with a sizeable number of Danish business leaders and on the kind of research that usually goes on in the library among the reference texts. We will presumably always have need for this kind of interpretive writing, and it is not likely that tables of statistics will ever take the place of judgment, though they can certainly provide a sound basis for judgment.

The fourth article, by Harris Huey, deals with the problems and opportunities of research in other countries, where the techniques of research are often less well developed and where even the problems of interviewing are quite different from comparable problems in the United States.

Of course, there are some skeptics who are inclined to take a dim view of research. We still hear acid remarks about the 1948 debacle. We hear it said

that "people won't always give you the right answers and often don't even *know* the right answers." We hear it said that a "good, creative idea" is worth more than a lot of statistics.

But the plain fact of the matter is that the business community seems to have increasing confidence in the techniques of research and the utility of the findings. If the hard-headed business man did not find research useful, he would scarcely be so inclined to use it.

And, use it he does. He uses it to find out how customers like his product or whether they would like a different one. He uses it to determine style preferences. He uses it to gauge employee attitudes. He uses it to find out whether his "message" is getting across. There is hardly a business question, especially a question having anything to do with public attitudes, that does not lend itself to research techniques.

This trend is naturally of the greatest interest to public relations people in whatever field they may operate. For in one sense the public relations man of not very long ago was something like the old-time aviator who "flew by the seat of his pants." But it may be ventured that guesswork is no longer enough.

The industrial public relations man today certainly ought to know what he is doing (and how well he has *been* doing) with as much certainty as the director of advertising, the marketing manager, or for that matter, the quality control engineer. If he works for government or for a public service organization the need for knowledge is no less.

There are at least four specific reasons for increased interest in research on the part of public relations men:

1. Managements become notably more interested in the question of whether public relations "pays off."
2. The population of the U.S. is rising at an enormous rate, thus multiplying the audiences to whom the practitioner wishes to talk.
3. There is more competition for attention, making it more important to know whether the latest top-side communiqué is on target.
4. And the expanding opportunities offered by new foreign markets present the practitioner with a puzzle he is not likely to solve unless he has a solid base of information he is not likely to have without research.

The editors hope that the articles in this issue will contribute to a greater understanding of research techniques and the contributions they can make to public relations work. ●

Can We Measure Results?

By Burns W. Roper

• Public relations practitioners know that public relations makes sense. But they are often hard pressed to prove it.

There are, of course, managements that are still skeptical about the "value" of public relations, to the point that they have no public relations department, employ no public relations counsel, and engage in no public relations activities.

In addition, there is a degree of skepticism on the part of managements who are users of public relations—even managements that employ large public relations departments of their own and outside public relations counsel as well. As a concept, modern management is aware of the value of public relations—or at least they are not sure enough that it is valueless to ignore public relations activities. At the same time, doubts are frequently voiced as to whether or not a specific public relations activity is really necessary, as to whether or not a particular public relations campaign is really working, as to whether or not the sponsoring organization is getting results.

This skepticism is natural, because public relations operates in the field of ideas, attitudes, and men's minds. There are no laboratory tests that will measure whether a public relations campaign works or does not work. You can't put a campaign in a test tube. But management nevertheless wants concrete proof of the value of public relations, just as it wants concrete proof of the value of its other activities.

Public opinion research as a measuring tool

As a result, public opinion research techniques are frequently—and not always successfully—resorted to as a means of supplying the required measure of effectiveness. I would like now to outline some of the problems in measuring the effectiveness of public relations campaigns, and some of the techniques that do and do not work in this area.

In addition to measuring the effectiveness of specific campaigns, there are, of course, other uses of research techniques in the field of public relations. Opinion studies are used to determine the extent to which people have information or misinformation about, favorable or unfavorable attitudes toward, a company. The research findings from such studies are often used to decide whether a public relations campaign is needed, and what direction it ought to take. Public opinion studies are also frequently used on an annual check-up basis.

But I am not concerned here with these uses of public opinion research. Rather, this article concerns the use of research in measuring the effectiveness of a specific public relations endeavor. A management that completely accepts the philosophy that its

future success is dependent on the good will of the public, that is well aware of the consequences of an enraged public, can nevertheless have serious doubts as to whether a specific campaign is doing a job and is worth the expenditure.

The public relations practitioner can, of course, show a questioning management all the clippings that may represent the implementation of a campaign. But this says nothing about its effectiveness. This is proof that a given story appeared. It is *not* proof that anyone read it. It is *not* proof that anyone believed it. And it certainly is *not* proof that it either created or continued a favorable attitude. That can be determined only from the people for whom the campaign was intended. And that is where public opinion research comes in.

Research is no panacea

But using public opinion research is no sure answer to the problem of measuring effectiveness. Measuring public relations effectiveness with research techniques is only slightly easier than measuring a gaseous body with a rubber band. What may be a "big campaign" to the public relations practitioner is "small potatoes" in the life of the average individual. Unless a person is in some way personally connected with a company by reason of working for it, owning stock in it, selling to it, or in some other relatively close and important way, he is not very much concerned about the company. It is just another company, among the hundreds that he is aware of and the thousands that he is not aware of. When a message is beamed at him about this company, he doesn't stop everything and pay strict at-

Continued on the Following Page

• BURNS W. ROPER, author of this speculative piece on "measurement," is a partner in Elmo Roper and Associates. He attended Yale University, served as a bomber pilot in World War II. He began as a "research trainee" in his firm in 1946. Since then he has become well known in the research field. In the present case, he was asked to take a totally independent view on some aspects of the relationship between public relations efforts and the common effort to "find out what happened" as a result. •

tention. Thousands of messages are beamed at him from other companies, from the Government, from his wife, his boss, his kids, his friends, and many of these messages come much closer to the mainstream of his life. This is one of the things that makes the public relations practitioner's job a difficult one. But it also makes the public opinion researcher's job a difficult one. How can you measure the effect of a particular flyspeck in this person's life?

Learning is often "subliminal"

In addition to the fact that any one public relations campaign is but a very small part of a person's total experience, the fact that the average person is not aware of how he came to acquire most of his knowledge makes the problem more difficult. One example may serve to illustrate the degree to which people are confused over the sources of their knowledge.

Recently our firm conducted a series of studies in a test market operation. Our client was introducing a new and unique product innovation. The product was introduced in several different markets, and in each market different media were used to announce the new product. One of the purposes of our studies (in addition to finding out how people liked this new product) was to measure the relative merits of the different media as means of successfully introducing the product. Part of our assignment was to determine the number of people who had heard of the new product and where they had heard about it.

Positive assurance sought

We so devised the study that we could obtain positive assurance as to whether people did or did not *in fact* know of the new product. We asked everyone we interviewed if they had seen or heard of "any new development or new product in (such-and-such a) field." If they said they had, they were asked to describe this new product or development to us. Only those who had *in fact* seen or heard of the product could describe it, since it had never before been on the mar-

ket anywhere. Those who successfully described the product were then asked how or where they first heard about it or saw it.

Interviewing in each of the test markets was first conducted two weeks after introduction. *Different* but comparable groups of people were interviewed four weeks after introduction, and still different but still comparable groups were interviewed six weeks after introduction. The purpose of the successive waves was to see how fast knowledge of the new product spread and to help determine how long the introductory campaign should be run when the product was marketed nationally. Each test market had all the basic media—daily newspaper, local radio station, local television, and obviously billboards, point-of-sale material, word-of-mouth, etc. In one of the test markets, radio and newspapers were used to introduce the product as well as point-of-sale material, but television was not used.

Positive identification

At the end of two weeks of promotion, we found a group of people who made positive identification of the new product. Not surprisingly, we found a larger group at the end of four weeks, and a still larger group at the end of six weeks. On each wave, those people who made positive identification were asked where they had first heard about the new product. Of the group who made positive identification at the end of two weeks, 7% said they first heard about it on radio, and 3% said they first heard about it on television—despite the fact that *no television had been used in this market*. Of the group that made positive identification at the end of four weeks, a much smaller 3% said they first heard about it on radio, but a much larger 9% said they first heard about it on television. At the end of six weeks, radio was again credited by a low 3% as the source of their information, and television was by this time credited with bringing them the news by 17%—even though television was *at no point used in the campaign*. As time passed, the radio percentage had declined, not

increased, and the television percentage had climbed to nearly six times radio's percentage.

The design of this study was such that people were not "kidding" us. People were not *claiming* to have heard of this product when in fact they hadn't, and hence were not *inventing* television as the source of their claimed knowledge. These results were obtained from people who *accurately* and *positively* described to us a product they *had* to have seen or heard about in order to be able to describe.

If, on as specific a thing as this, with questioning that was conducted as recently after the event as it was, there is this kind of vagueness as to how and where people get their knowledge, how then can people ever be expected to remember the source of a more general piece of knowledge or the source of a vaguely favorable attitude? How then can the effects of a campaign be determined—a campaign, that is, which is designed to affect people's attitudes, not necessarily to cause them to buy something?

The "before and after" panel

One device that is frequently—and often mistakenly—used for this purpose is the panel technique. Interview a cross section of the people that you intend to beam a campaign to; determine the extent of their knowledge and the climate of their attitudes prior to the start of the campaign; conduct the campaign; subsequently re-interview the same people. The theory behind such a design is that since the effects of one particular campaign are apt to be small, re-interviewing the same people will eliminate any possibility of sampling or statistical error that could result from interviewing different people; hence any change that occurs is a bona fide change, due to the campaign and not merely the result of statistical fluke.

Such an approach will almost invariably "prove" that a campaign has been effective to one degree or another. But as we learned in an experimental study several years ago, this

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“Is there a bomber’s moon for corporations?”



“During the War, the moon was a cause for anxiety as well as a romantic symbol. A full moon, unblemished by clouds, could presage a heavy air attack.

“Corporate management, too, has to watch the ‘climate’ . . . has to be prepared against the onslaught of outside forces.

“Restive stockholders aren’t always *friendly* partners.

“Developing a solid, sympathetic understanding for management’s aims and accomplishments is one of the many benefits to be derived from a sound financial relations program. Fire prevention is not only cheaper, but also more effective, than fire fighting.

“Certainly, in 1958 alert management will create and cultivate favorable, well-informed attitudes among key financial men . . . to whom investors look for guidance.”

says W. HOWARD CHASE, President
Communications Counselors, Inc.



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"proof" of effectiveness is apt to be an illusion. In this experimental study to which I refer, we interviewed a cross section of people and asked a series of direct and indirect questions to determine both people's knowledge and attitudes about a particular company. We disguised our interest in this particular company by asking about a number of companies.

Subsequent to interviewing, the company started a series of television programs, the commercials on which conveyed a number of institutional messages about the company. Six months after the program had been on the air, the same group of people were re-interviewed and were asked identically the same questions. On nearly every question, regardless of whether they were knowledge questions or attitude questions, sharp improvement was noted among those who were viewers of the program. The improvement ranged from a low of about 20% on one question to a high of 100% on another question. On the face of it, it seemed clear that the institutional commercials had performed successfully, and that the effectiveness of the campaign had been demonstrably proved. This proof seemed more positive in light of the fact that there was no improvement in either knowledge or attitudes about the other companies which were included in the study for the purposes of disguising our interest in the client's company.

Affecting what you are supposedly measuring

However, at the time of the second interview, a completely new cross section was also interviewed, similar in all respects to the before-and-after cross section, except that this second cross section was only interviewed *after* the campaign—not before. The answers obtained from the program viewers on this second cross section one would have expected to be identical or nearly identical to those obtained from the viewers in the other cross section on the *second* wave of interviewing. They were not. They were instead identical or nearly identical (within the limits of sampling error) to the answers obtained from

the other cross section on the *first* wave of interviewing—to the answers originally obtained *before* the program had run. The "clear proof" of effectiveness as demonstrated by the before-and-after panel technique evaporated.

What had happened was that on the original wave of interviewing we asked a series of questions, many of them knowledge questions, about the client's company and several other companies. By so doing, we focussed respondent's *attention* on these companies, made them conscious of how much they didn't know about these companies, and made them realize how fuzzy their attitudes were towards these companies. As a result of this stimulus, they were particularly responsive to the client's institutional messages when the series of programs came on the air. And as a result of this "one-two punch"—our having raised the questions, the program having answered them—they proved decidedly better informed, and significantly more favorable to the client company when they were interviewed six months later. The viewers in the matched cross section who received all the "answers" by reason of exposure to the program, but who had had none of the "questions" raised, by reason of not having been interviewed prior to the program, were *relatively unresponsive* to the program's institutional commercials, and hence showed a response pattern almost identical to that obtained before the program had been run.

Panels are no good?

This example does not invalidate the panel technique. The panel technique has many valuable uses, can provide highly accurate information, in many instances is far preferable to successive but different cross sections, and in some instances is the only technique that can be used. What this example *does* do is serve to illustrate that it is not a suitable technique for this purpose.

Beyond the negative result of this experiment, there is also a positive result. The interview alone did not increase people's knowledge and did not change their attitudes. Nor in this



Mr. Roper

instance did the program alone do much by way of increasing people's knowledge or improving their attitudes. But the combined effect of the two components, each of which was in this instance relatively ineffective in itself, resulted in significant accomplishment. How—or even whether—this one-two punch can be adapted to the implementing (rather than the measuring) of a public relations campaign is a problem for the public relations practitioner. But if a way can be found to implement it, it would seem to promise greater effectiveness than the normal promotional campaign.

In addition, while this technique is insufficient for measuring effectiveness, the use of an interview first, a campaign later, and then a second interview with the same people can be employed as a means of *pretesting* the relative effectiveness of different kinds of promotional appeals or messages.

I mentioned earlier that the improvement in knowledge and opinions as determined by the panel interviews ranged from a low of 20% improvement to a high of 100%. A variety of different institutional messages was included during the series of programs, and each was shown a number of times during the series. Some of them produced relatively low increases in knowledge and/or favorable attitudes. Others produced significantly higher increases in knowledge and/or favorable attitudes. As a result, we had a measure of the relative effectiveness (although admittedly an *exaggerated* measure of effectiveness) for each of the different commercials. Whether the differences

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WHO IS SHERMAN?

By Gerhart D. Wiebe

• Among the monuments in Central Park, there is an equestrian bronze of General Sherman. A New Yorker, whose business compelled him to move to another city, had been in the habit of taking his little boy for a walk in Central Park each evening. Since they would walk "to Sherman and back," the boy became attached to this monument. During their preparations to move, the crucial moment of leave-taking came for the little boy as he and his father walked "to Sherman" for the last time.

The boy gazed at the statue, and, as he turned to go, he blinked back his tears and said: "Daddy, who is that sitting on Sherman?"

What does your public see?

Public relations men, and especially those serving the larger corporations, find it no easy job to keep abreast of what is seen, felt and thought regarding their companies. Public relations research is essential in that job. The purpose of this article is to discuss a trend in research toward understanding of the processes of perception among the public. We might call what

follows a discussion of the question: "Who—or what—does *your* public see as Sherman?"

The story about Sherman is said to be true. It serves to illustrate how two people, who presumably understand each other very well, can focus on quite different aspects of a subject. If this problem exists between father and son, it is hard to overestimate the size of the problem as it exists between a corporation and its public. The problem is familiar, but in a real sense it is constantly new because it is harder and harder to solve.

In an increasingly complex society, it is increasingly dangerous to assume that a company is known and judged on its merits. The gap between how a company behaves and what people think of it broadens as the psychological distance between companies and the public increases.

How much does the man on the street really know about Union Carbide or about U. S. Steel or *Time* and *Life*? Very little; but he still has opinions about these companies, and about many others. And although he isn't much interested in "studying up" on them, he will not hesitate to register *pro* or *con* if a company or an industry gets caught up in a highly-publicized crisis. The basis for his opinions is not limited to how a company acts and talks. It also includes what Joe Doakes *thinks* he knows; what he for better or for worse has associated with the company.

An increasing number of public relations men are coming to feel that it is impossible to estimate the value of what they or their companies say and do until they have investigated the idea environment or (in psychological terminology) the *perceptual*

context in which the public already has the companies pigeonholed.

Perception

The word *perception* is used in counterdistinction to *sensation*. Sensation is simply the mechanical impact of a stimulus on a sense organ. But if the stimulus gets inside so that you interpret it or process it, you have perception. Perception is interpreting a stimulus. If you print a message and send copies to a mailing list of 10,000 and assume that everyone gets his mail and opens it, then you can assume that your print stimulated the retinas of 10,000 people. Thus far we speak in terms of sensation. But how about perception? For how many of the 10,000 did the message "get inside?" How many take in the message? How many would think they know what you said? They may have interpreted your message far differently than you would wish, but if they have taken in your message and have interpreted it, processed it, assigned meaning to it, then they have perceived.

It is in the study of *how* people perceive that public relations men can look for new and important advances in research.

The empty head assumption

By now, the "empty head" assumption should be no more than a straw man, but from time to time, evidence of this fallacious assumption still crops up, so let's review it.

In terms of this assumption, members of the public are regarded as simple, receptive, uncluttered by past experience; that is, as being *empty*.

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• DR. GERHART D. WIEBE is a partner in the firm of Elmo Roper and Associates. He was research psychologist at the Columbia Broadcasting System for ten years, and was Assistant to the President for the year before he joined his present firm. He is a past president of the America Association for Public Opinion Research and a Fellow in the American Psychological Association. •

headed. Given this premise, the job is clear. You say good things about your company and say them clearly. You buy circulation for these messages, and you assume that your messages drop into the receptive and empty vessels which constitute the public, and are there digested and appropriately filed for implementation in future behavior. The researcher then goes out and catalogues the incidence of appropriate information, facts and acts, and that's that. Research of this type often operates as a quantitative grading system that tells how well the public relations man "delivered the mail." But this kind of research is out-dated. It is over-simplified and it often penalizes the public relations man unfairly.

The perceptual context

The glaring fallacy in the empty head approach is the assumption that people are simple receptacles. As soon as we face up to the obvious fact that people are enormously complex, that they are, each one, a composite of their past experiences, that they are beset with thousands of stimuli, and that they accept the ones that fit best with the unnumbered ideas that they already have in their heads—as soon as we line up these facts, the whole idea of public relations and public relations research takes on a different form. The center of interest shifts to the people and to the attitudes, dispositions, facts, fancies, concerns and associations that color the way they perceive a company and its activities. A basic function of research then is to scout the "lay of the land," to chart the context in which people perceive your company. A message, regardless of its authenticity, is likely to be rejected or twisted into a more "fitting" shape if it doesn't make sense in terms of what people already think that they know.

The bigger and the more complex a society becomes, the more important this scouting of public perception becomes. This idea should not be oversimplified. It is not just "going out to see what they think of us." We would come closer to the truth if, for purposes of analogy, we let a word stand



Dr. Wiebe

for your company. Then it is like going out to see what sentence they have put your word into. The sentence goes far in determining the meaning of a word. To illustrate, suppose the word representing your company is "smooth." If the "sentence" in which people put "smooth" is "a smooth, efficient operation," that is one thing; but if it should be "a smooth, slippery operation" it would be quite another. The perceptual context goes far in determining the meaning that the public assigns to your company and to your messages concerning it. And modern research can go far in defining that perceptual context—in giving you a "feel" for the audience.

The rational man assumption

People have opinions and attitudes about almost everything. If they don't have relevant facts and experiences on which to base their opinions and attitudes, the nature of perception is such that they use irrelevant ones. So if the "empty head" assumption is fallacious, so is the "rational man" assumption. We all know that even in matters where people have much at stake, and know it, old memories, prejudices and quirks of personality creep in and compromise the rationality of their thinking. This being the case, we certainly cannot suppose that people would hold to straight, clear, disciplined thinking on matters where they don't see much at stake. So it is natural that public relations men are often faced with strange but nonetheless real tangles of irrelevant and mistaken notions that get hooked up with their companies in the perceptual processes of the public. The problem

is to chart the irrational elements, as well as the rational ones, that constitute the general context in which people perceive the company.

Charting the perceptual context

We recently completed a study for a large company which controls many subsidiary firms, all offering the same service.

The study showed that a factual information theme regarding the company and its services was getting little serious attention and was simply not believed by many of those who had gotten beyond the pictures and had read the messages.

Additional data showed why. We found that prejudice, folklore, gossip and misinformation combined to outweigh the authentic public relations message, and to discredit it. The solution in this case, as in most, was many-sided. But one part of it was to select a theme in an area that was uncontaminated by popular misinformation, as a means of persuading people to try the service and, accordingly, to expose their misconceptions to the corrective influence of personal experience.

The key to this problem lay, not in what the company was saying, but in other things the people *thought* they knew. And, unfortunately, the untrue was discrediting the true. There was nothing wrong with the public relations message *per se*. The trouble was in the context in which people perceived it.

Time when research was limited

There was a time when research for this client might have been limited to counting the number of people who had exposed themselves to the public relations theme. Since the number (which, of course, we ascertained) was small, the situation might have seemed to call for a more spectacular theme. Actually, the solution, based on modern research findings, was a *less* spectacular theme, but a theme that was known to be both constructive for the company and compatible with the public perception. The client reports favorable results following the

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Experience



Experience can't be pictured or drawn.
Yet it is recognized, sought after,
desired and envied.

For Experience is knowledge, skill
and practical wisdom gained by
personal study, feeling or work.

Experience is also the proud by-product
of Pan Am's 30 years of pioneer flying
—first on the Atlantic, first on the
Pacific, first in Latin America and
first 'round the world.

PAN AMERICAN
WORLD'S MOST EXPERIENCED AIRLINE

introduction of the new campaign. Accordingly, there is good reason to suppose that improvement stemmed from this partnership of research and public relations. The tactic was 1) to chart the perceptual context and then 2), with research findings as background, to tailor messages which were both authentic and compatible with the unique mix of fact and fancy that characterize the perceptual context in which people consider the company.

A "middle course" between mass sampling and motivation research

This approach to public relations research cuts down the middle between the extremes of traditional large scale sampling research on the one hand, and small sample motivation research on the other. It employs techniques from both schools and this combination of techniques may well be the most promising avenue of research development during the coming decade.

Consider how it might apply, for example, in the public relations program of a metal manufacturing company.

It is characteristic of our society that the public is psychologically remote from the metal manufacturer. Neither the ordinary man nor the ordinary woman buys, sells or uses metal in the form in which it leaves the manufacturer's hands. Most people are not much concerned one way or another about such a company. They are much more concerned with problems that lie closer to the nub of their own personal existence. Accordingly, they are inclined to be casual, superficial and careless about sources, implications and meanings that refer to the metal industry and to take in those impressions, authentic or not, which serve best to round out or make legitimate their own beliefs, concerns, predispositions.

Suppose that the public relations research for such a company is of the traditional, "factual" sampling type. Such studies show, with depressing consistency, that people are appallingly ignorant of facts concerning the company; that they do not much care about getting better informed. Still the

public relations man knows from experience that back in the corner of most people's minds there is a rag bag of impressions, hunches, prejudices, attitudes that make avid readers and watchers and listeners if, for example, the breath of scandal or the scent of monopoly is attached to the company by an eager investigator. The straight, factual, sampling study often reveals problems (e.g. "The public doesn't know the facts") without providing "footholds and leverage" that would help the public relations man to cope with the human equation that lies behind the problems.

Alternatively, suppose that the company turns to motivation research. A motivation study may produce remarkable and unanticipated scraps from these mental rag bags, but the public relations man can never be sure (because motivation research is based on small samples) whether he is focusing on an important idea held by large numbers, coast to coast, or on one held by small numbers on the Eastern Seaboard. To resume our analogy, the motivation study often provides "footholds and leverage," but the public relations man is never sure whether exploiting the foothold and leverage will clear a roadblock, start a landslide or pry loose a pebble.

Psychological savvy

The need is to combine the psychological exploring of the motivation study with the quantitative reliability of the sampling study. The public relations man needs, and can have, both psychological savvy and statistical representativeness in his research information. While the furor over the relative merits of motivation and quantification implies the incompatibility of the two, the practical merging of the two techniques is nevertheless

less an accomplished fact—and has been for some time. And the combined approach is widely used by many competent, even if not highly vocal, researchers.

The context of wine

To cite an example from our own shop, some years ago we made a study for a wine growers association.

The findings that apply to our present discussion were these: People perceived wine in a context of festivity. Wine belonged in a context of ceremonial, dress-up occasions. A large proportion of the population enjoyed wine, and many even kept it on hand. But they simply didn't think of it except when special occasions activated a chain of associations, one of which was wine. There was nothing wrong with wine. There was nothing wrong with people's taste for it.

What was wrong was the perceptual context. People would look at a wine ad and, if they found it attractive, would, so to speak, file the impression in a mental corner labeled, "birthdays, holidays, anniversaries." The client reported a marked increase in consumption of wine following a campaign which, among its themes, broadened the context in which wine appeared as appropriate. But the role of sampling in this study, which was nationwide, must not be overlooked. The finding that we have reported, as well as many others, was multiplied in its significance because it was reported reliably as it occurred in various age groups, sections of the country, occupational and city size groups. And there were important differences. Thus the practical values of sampling research and motivation research were combined in charting the context in which messages about wine are perceived.

Our findings from numerous studies have led us to regard the perceptual context as a major research target. Given a flexible use of available research techniques, this subject can be explored both with statistical reliability and with motivational depth. The yield of such research can aid materially in both assessing and improving a company's "posture" in the perceptions of the public. ●

Reading Between the Lines

"A sagacious reader who is capable of reading between these lines what does not stand written in them, but is nevertheless implied, will be able to form some conception."

—Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

COMMENTS FROM COPENHAGEN

By Stephen E. Fitzgerald, Jr.

• Public Relations in Denmark, when compared with theory and practice in the United States, seems well "behind the times"; but there are signs that there may be increasing activity during the next few years. One reason is that many Danish business leaders are becoming rapidly aware that the Common European Market will require a new approach to marketing plans, including some well-conceived public relations programming and operations.

At present, there are no private firms engaged in public relations counselling, though one individual, Hakon Bruun, acts as a part-time consultant to the Unilever group in Denmark. Dansk Esso is so far the only private company to establish a fully independent public relations department. This was instituted by Knud Petersen (formerly Assistant Public

Relations and Advertising Manager of the Tuborg Breweries), who is Executive Secretary to the Board of Dansk Esso. His successor, and Esso's current public relations officer, is John C. Jensen.

A number of international firms with local operations, and some Danish firms, particularly those who are heavy exporters, are also giving increased attention to their public relations responsibilities. In the majority of cases, the public relations activities of these companies are delegated to the advertising managers, but some good initial work is being accomplished.

In a few firms, the administrators are acting on the basis of consciously-planned public relations policy. Of particular note are Paul Fabricius, Managing Director of Unilever's Sunlight Division; Peter F. Heering, sole owner and director of the Cherry Heering Company; and Helge Andersen, one of Denmark's ablest market research men, who serves as marketing and public relations consultant to the Hellesens Battery Firm.

The level of knowledge and understanding in Denmark about public relations might be compared to a pyramid with its top missing. Many of the tools and techniques are in use, but top-level company planning takes little account of public relations as a policy framework.

Press relations

For a country whose total population is 4,500,000, Denmark has an amazing number of newspapers, magazines and periodicals — about

2,000 in all! There are over 200 daily newspapers alone, and with the radio and TV systems state-owned, and allowing no mention of any commercial enterprise, press relations form the principle public relations activity of most Danish companies.

The press corps is characterized by a highly individualistic approach to news stories, and a company's success in this area depends largely on its spokesman (often the advertising manager) maintaining good relations with press representatives. However, in contrast to many other countries, there is virtually no Danish newspaper which may be induced, by means of an advertisement, to accept copy. The Danish press officer must present a story with news value, and it is on this alone that most company news makes the columns.

Technical journals

On the other hand, as is the case almost everywhere, the majority of trade and technical journals, of which there are *over a thousand* in Denmark, are fairly easy to persuade. However, most of these publications are produced by small associations, and thus, individually, have relatively little communication value.

Press "demonstrations" are used from time to time, usually with good results. Last year the Ford Motor Company put on a demonstration of an imported model from their German plants. Members of the press were strapped into the car and run over a tough obstacle course on a military testing track, including the

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usual chuckholes and ramps. According to Mr. H. Winther, their advertising and public relations manager, publicity resulting from this was so good that local orders are still ahead of supply.

Another example of professional quality comes from the firm of Plumrose, Denmark's largest canners and exporters of meat and vegetable products. The Danish consumption of canned goods runs at about five cans per head a year, whereas in the U. S. this figure is up in the thirties. This explains why Plumrose exports over 95 per cent of its approximately \$32,000,000 yearly turnover to some 130 world markets.

With the realization that the home market is also important, they recently introduced a new line of deep-frozen fish, meats and vegetables. In a style that would make any American public relations man proud, they hired the dining room and chef of the local Hotel Richmond and put on a press luncheon prepared from their frozen food line. Their efforts were well-received.

Annual reports

A few companies have begun experimenting with illustrated annual reports. Dansk Esso was the first to do so, in 1947, and met with success.

In the last two or three years, a few other companies have found similar efforts worthwhile. Among them are the Tuborg Breweries, SAS Airlines, Ford, The Bugmeister and Wain ship-builders and several banks. However, work in this area is limited, and a look at local "stockholder relations" will help to explain why.

Stockholder relations

The entire area of stockholder relations receives scant attention in Denmark, and the explanation has several parts. First, stocks here are in most cases high-priced, and thus there are not many *individual* stockholders to start with. Secondly, almost all corporation stocks are bought through the banks and brokerage houses, with the investor's name kept secret. Thus most companies with any sizable share-issue often don't know who



A Copenhagen science teacher is shown here using educational panels concerning the production of oil, supplied by Dansk-Ess to more than 3,000 schools throughout Denmark.

the majority of the stockholders are. Many companies with relatively expensive shares are owned in large blocks by the numerous holding and joint-investment companies and insurance societies. Most local investors, and the general public as well, are not actively interested in what a company is up to so long as it stays in business and pays a dividend.

This apathy of the public towards business is matched by business apathy towards the public. This is an important key to understanding the need for public relations work here.

Customer, employee, and community relations

Poul B. Christensen, Circulation Director for Denmark's largest and oldest daily paper, the *Berlingske Tidende*, wrote the first and only Danish book on public relations in 1946. While discussing the development of public relations here he remarked, "Without knowing the term 'Public Relations,' a lot of Danish firms have made sincere efforts to obtain good relations with employees and customers. Others could do more in that direction. Especially I think they could do more towards the community, the local public."

Some of these efforts have been highly effective, as in the case of a little cartoon and verse booklet issued by the Tuborg Breweries to their

drivers and coachmen. The object was community goodwill and the last verse (in translation) sums up its theme:

*"These examples show the way
Tuborg men must drive each day.*

*Tuborg's horse and motor corps,
Be a good ambassador!*

*Drive with care and drive with
style,
Always with a Tuborg smile."*

Another goodwill project in the area of safety was explained by Einar Thurmer, Press and Public Relations Manager for General Motors International. One of their successful events is a yearly program for the safety-patrol kids around the country. Every year, GMI plays host to over a thousand of these children, treating a dozen of them, chosen by lot, to special rides in the company's Cadillac. Newspapers and magazines always give this event coverage, and it has done much to make the country's drivers and school children more safety conscious.

When Hellesens, the world's oldest battery firm, initiated an extensive rationalization program some years ago, an employee communications program was organized. According to Helge Andersen, "We discussed fully with our employees the reasons why we were instituting new methods of

production and cutting down from over a thousand different battery types produced before the war, to our most important one-hundred and fifty. The employees, without exception, rallied to the new scheme fully convinced it would mean increased employment and job security through higher production and increased sales."

Example of good employee relations

One of the finest examples in Denmark of good employee relations is seen at the famous Cherry Heering Company. This has been a family business since its beginning four generations ago in 1818. In order to foster a spirit of understanding, it has been a tradition for the head of the firm to take a stroll around the plant every morning, giving a friendly greeting to the workers. The present owner and director, Peter F. Heering, has continued this practice and thus come into daily contact with almost all of his 140 employees.

Last fall, the SAS Airlines introduced a successful combination of press and customer relations by stationing reporters in the airport arrival hall around the clock to interview celebrities and other newsworthy travelers. According to Per Mortensen, Press and Public Relations Officer, these interviews have created a great

amount of publicity for SAS and their customers.

Labor relations

Poul Leth, Personnel Manager for GMI, which established its first overseas branch in Copenhagen in 1923, explained the operations of the Personnel Managers' Association, of which he is a founding member. This organization was started in 1946 and today numbers one hundred members. Their main work, in view of the highly organized and powerful labor unions, is to keep constant check on comparative wage and salary scales and employee benefit programs, both to avoid union charges of contract infringement and also to exchange ideas and information.

Another association which has done much to improve labor-management understanding is the Danish Employees' Confederation. Started in 1896, when Denmark was feeling the first stages of industrialization, its membership today is about 24,000. These members employ about one-half the total labor force in Denmark and the organization handles the negotiation of all labor contracts with the Danish Federation of Labor.

Guest relations

A number of local companies have an "open factory" policy for visitors



Shown here is part of the crew of the U.S. Navy vessel being conducted through the Tuborg Brewery in Copenhagen.

and conduct daily tours through their plants. Notable in this work are the two famous breweries, Carlsberg and Tuborg. Each has a full-time staff of guides with facilities in five or six foreign languages, who through the year conduct over one hundred thousand guests through their respective plants. During these tours, visitors are impressed by the cleanliness, modern equipment and comfortable working conditions and, after a final sampling of the product, a lot of new friends are made for the companies.

Also included under this heading should be the activities of an effective organization, the National Travel Association of Denmark. This is a non-profit organization and receives 80 per cent of its funds from the Government, the rest from hotel, restaurant, public transportation trades and local private industry.

One of their most interesting projects is their "Meet A Dane" department, which has on file several hundred Danish families interested in serving as hosts to foreigners for an afternoon tea or an evening meal. This affords visitors the opportunity to experience the home life of a Danish family and strike-up new friends.

The Hellesens battery firm, mentioned previously, also conducts some 8,000 science students and their teachers through their plants every year. In addition, they supply schools around the country with an oversized breakdown kit of a standard dry cell battery for classroom demonstration and discussions.

Another well-conceived public relations project is carried out by the SAS Airlines, which had its start in 1946 by a combination of the separate airlines of Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

Stock is half-owned by the three Governments and half by the public in these countries.

SAS's central maintenance plant for all European operations is located at the Copenhagen airport. They take groups through this plant to demonstrate the extensive amount of work and care which goes into keeping a plane airborne. Visitors are shown how every SAS plane, after ten-

Continued on the Following Page

thousand hours flying time, is brought in, taken apart "down to the last screw."

RELATED FIELDS

Opinion and market research

In contrast to the limited understanding and practice of public relations, one of the professions increasingly relied on by public relations practitioners, opinion and market research, is fairly well represented in Denmark.

Gallup has had offices here since the last war; Helge Andersen, mentioned as a consultant to Hellesens, has his own organization; and several advertising agencies offer market research services to their clients and others. One of the more prominent is *Informa*, a subsidiary firm owned by Harlang & Toksvig, one of Denmark's largest ad agencies.

In 1956, Jorgen Skalberg and Erik Lund launched their firm, *Observa*, which besides being well on its feet locally, is the Danish associate of Elmo Wilson's *INRA* (International Research Associates) and is cooperating in the recently instituted *World Poll*.

Unilever also owns a firm known as "Household Analysis" which, besides keeping tabs on their many home products (including Lux and Rinso), solicits outside business as well. The major activity of this firm is running a consumer panel which gets its information from a group of 800 housewives around the country. Cooperation is cultivated by what manager Ole Jacobson claims as the most successful "payment" method yet devised. Instead of giving the housewives money for each report sent in, they offer her a free subscription to any weekly magazine of her choice.

Advertising agencies

There are forty-one advertising agencies in Denmark recognized by the association of daily newspapers.

Agencies are forbidden to submit news releases to the press on behalf of a client but do undertake some other services, such as information booklets and direct mail campaigns. The latter are handled in a unique way; there are

no "Direct Mail Houses," but the national post office system will deliver materials, unaddressed, to certain specific groups at very low cost.

Samfunds-Kontakt

By way of footnote, it is interesting that the term, "Public Relations" has no equivalent in the Danish language and thus is almost always used in its English form. However, on the door outside the Employers' Confederation's public relations office hangs the sign, "Samfunds-Kontakt," which is the best effort yet to capture the significance of public relations in Danish. Literally translated it means "Community Relations."

Europe's oldest kingdom

Denmark is situated directly north of Germany between the Baltic and North Seas. It is a little country with a total land area of 16,000 square miles.

There are 4,500,000 Danes today and their written history goes back over a thousand years to such colorful historical characters as Harald Bluetooth and King Sweyn Forkbeard, the Viking who conquered England in 1013.

Constitutional monarchy was introduced in 1849 and today King Frederick IX holds the hereditary crown. Legislative power is vested in the Folketing, a single-chamber parliament, which consists of 179 seats held by the six political parties.

The Danes are a friendly people who enjoy one of the world's highest standards of living. However, they pay about the highest progressive income taxes to maintain it. Over 25 per cent of the local and state taxes go for the old age pension and housing schemes, unemployment and sickness benefits, and hospital and nursing care.

Every Dane receives a good education and the elementary, secondary and university systems are among the best. There are a large number of trade and technical schools plus probably more adult education programs (the labor unions are outstanding in this work) than anywhere else in the world. One of the most important results is that illiteracy doesn't exist



Mr. Fitzgerald

and the Danes are a well-informed people.

Foreign trade

Denmark's one really valuable "natural resource" is her location at the crossroads of North-European trade; her highly developed and efficient system of harbors and ports has facilitated the growth of vital export industries.

THE FUTURE

Excellent and diverse means of communications are open to everyone here. The fact that they are not being used to their fullest possible advantage is one of the situations which the progressive Danish Sales and Advertising Association is paying attention to.

This organization of advertisers, agencies and media people is headed nationally by Paul Fabricius, of Sunlight, and the Copenhagen chapter by Knud Petersen of Dansk Esso. These two leaders are advocates of more and better public relations programming.

Fabricius was asked if he could put his finger on the central Public Relations problem in Denmark. He replied, "The Danish commercial world in its broadest sense, in fact the entire European business world, has failed to place itself in the community at large, in the eyes of the public. This is the basic reason why the 'planned economy' is progressing and why Socialism could one day flourish in Europe."

What, he was asked, would be the first step in improving this situation? "The first project," he said, "is for the commercial world to take stock of

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THE WHEELS THAT GO EVERYWHERE



The Meaning of Headlines to Public Relations

An International Report

By Frank Bonilla and
Harris Huey

• "The business of the historian is booming," remarked Allan Nevins, Columbia University professor of history, in *The New York Times* not long ago.

The boom, of course, is not just in the writing of history, but in the pace of events. The texts that we all know divide the past into great epochs—the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution—each covering an enormous span. Today, events that promise to change the face of the world follow one another in dizzying succession.

Public relations men everywhere, like research men, have good reason to study the changing tides. For the

events can have profound effect on the problems and the operations of the two disciplines.

Events of recent months alone have underscored the impermanence of today's power blocs around the world. The Soviet challenge to U.S. technology has shaken complacency in this country. The military implications of the Russian breakthrough into space are unclear, but the fact remains that a major propaganda victory has been scored.

The hard-won Common Market in Europe and the talk of a political federation of European states are current history. These events are part of the same pattern as the Bandung and Cairo conferences of Asian and African leaders and the talk of a Common Market for Latin America. The consolidation of Arab states and the tremendous momentum gathered by Arab nationalistic movements are another echo of this tide. On another level, there is the drive for national independence by former colonial areas; witness Ghana, Tunis, Algeria.

Revolt and civil strife are commonplaces of the day's news. In Venezuela, an aroused populace, spearheaded by students, has driven out what appeared to be a firmly entrenched dictatorship. In the Cuban Sierra Maestra and the streets of Havana, guerrillas battle against another military strongman. In Indonesia, a rebel regime has been proclaimed,

threatening to plunge that country into prolonged struggle.

And so "the business of the historian is booming."

The international public relations man looks as avidly to the morning's headlines from abroad as for the company releases he creates the day before. The headlines toll the events that fix his daily working calendar. It is this history-in-the-making that creates the situations with which he has to deal: shifting markets, threats of exclusion, trends to nationalization of industry, new competition—and new opportunities as well, a more favorable political climate, new friends to be made.

Whether the public relations man is caught by surprise, or finds his anticipations confirmed in the day's news, often depends on how solidly he is backed with research. How adept he becomes in turning new developments to the advantage of his company or his clients likewise rests, in many cases, on how sophisticated he has become in the use of research from abroad.

The fall of a dictator

The total U.S. capital investment in Latin America at the end of 1957 was nearly ten and one-half billion dollars. Almost one-third of this was in oil, with a heavy concentration in Venezuela. Viewed from a distance, the rise and fall of military strongmen,

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and the recurrent civil uprisings that have marked Latin American history, smack of comic opera. The fact is that a long-enduring struggle to erase economic inequalities and political repression has been at the root of much of this unrest. When Colonel Perez Jimenez of Venezuela fled to the Dominican Republic in the face of an angry civil and military uprising, this was another episode in a story that has been repeated in other Latin American countries nearly half a dozen times in the last two years. It is also a graphic example of how, practically overnight, the situation in a country can change completely. Few experts would have predicted that the Venezuelan *caudillo* was to be dislodged so readily, or that popular feeling could be mobilized so swiftly or would stand up so stoutly against the guns of the dictator. Probably many Venezuelans were themselves surprised to find that they had delivered themselves by their own hand with such a brief struggle.

Sudden change poses problems

A sudden change such as that registered in Venezuela poses problems for public relations, but provides at the same time a unique opportunity for getting at public opinion. When a regime falls under the weight of such widespread popular repudiation, it is important to assess quickly the direction that national opinion is taking.

But under these circumstances, estimates of what such a nation is thinking and aspires to are more likely than usual to go askew unless they are based on scientific research methods. This is particularly true when the public has been muzzled by restraints on free speech for long periods. On the other hand, while dictatorship does not provide a favorable climate for opinion research, the optimism and release of tension that follows such a harsh experience often make for a frank and easy discussion of personal views on national problems. It should be noted that a preoccupation with the maneuvering and realignment of forces *at the top*, and a concomitant failure to consider underlying public feeling, can prove fatal to public relations interests in such circumstances.

ON TO BRUSSELS

The President and members of the Board of Directors of the Belgian Centre of Public Relations have announced plans for the first World Congress of Public Relations to be held in Brussels, Belgium, from the 25th to the 27th of June—within the framework of the 1958 Brussels World Fair.

The World Congress is under the auspices of the Commissariat General of the Belgian Government. The theme of the conference will be "Public Relations in the Service."

The instability of the Venezuelan and of other strongman regimes in Latin America signals the end of an epoch. American business has wisely become increasingly attentive to the views and feelings of foreign publics. Research studies of attitudes toward American business, toward governmental controls on industry, the nationalization of major natural resources, and other vital issues, have been carried out in a number of Latin American countries by U.S. corporations. This research has provided public relations men in the U.S. and throughout the hemisphere with valuable guidance that could not be obtained from any other source.

The European common market

In Europe, the U.S. has a total investment of just over seven billion dollars in private capital alone. Military commitments and economic aid funnel additional U.S. wealth into the European economy. What meaning for the conduct of American business has the recent establishment of a six-nation Common Market area?

Will the economic consolidation of the continent lead to the gradual exclusion of American producers from the European market? What does the public really expect the Common Market scheme to achieve?

How will the new economic integration affect public attitudes toward products and producers outside the regional bloc? To what extent does public support of economic and political integration in Europe reflect an undercurrent of hostility to the United States?

In most countries of Europe, there are excellent research facilities, and some research bearing on these questions has already been carried out. Surely much more will follow. Europeans themselves will, no doubt, be justifiably more concerned with other aspects of the Common Market problem. The kinds of questions that American research will be asking abroad are, of course, much the same as those that European producers entering the U.S. market are asking themselves, and bringing before the American public with increasing frequency.

Some world poll results

Since November of 1957, newspapers around the world have been publishing weekly the results of the *World Poll*. The *World Poll* periodically puts questions of timely interest to probability samples of national populations in more than a dozen countries of Europe, Latin America and Asia. The *World Poll* is not aimed at specific public relations problems, but the public relations practitioner with interests abroad can find direct implications for his own research plans in some of the findings.

How big a blow to U.S. prestige was the launching of the Soviet sputnik? Results showed that the propaganda impact of the first satellite launching was impressive indeed. Nine out of ten people in the European countries polled knew the Russians had put a moon in space. This made it one of the most highly publicized events of our time. Confidence in the

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technical superiority of the U.S. had unquestionably been shaken by the Russian feat, although in most of the countries reached by the poll there was a sizeable reservoir of faith in the U.S.

In any case, there was clearly a job to be done in restoring the trust of allied peoples in the American capacity not only to lead them to new technological and economic triumphs, but to guarantee their defense.

While the Soviet moon made its first globe-girdling rounds, the perennial debate over tariff restrictions on imports to the United States was going on with unusual vigor. Protectionists were on the march, seeking to curb the President's power to make reciprocal tariff agreements with other nations. In other countries, similar controversies were raging. In those weeks, the *World Poll* asked people in thirteen nations whether they wanted higher or lower tariffs on imports from abroad. Among those with opinions on this complex issue, advocates of more unrestricted trade formed a plurality.

High tariff wall

Ironically, Japan, a country that would suffer greatly if shut out from U.S. markets by a high tariff wall, is among the countries with the greatest number applauding high tariffs for her own protection. Here was information gathered simultaneously in more than a dozen of the major industrial nations of the world on a topic of vital concern to all American producers with international interests.

A few weeks later, the *Poll* reported on an issue more directly linked to the concerns of the public relations representative of American business abroad. What should be the relationship of government to big industry? Should government leave big industries strictly alone, regulate them sufficiently to protect the public, or take over entirely the ownership and management of large industries? Results on this question were of special interest because in several of the countries polled, we had answers to these same questions asked of the public in 1953. A shift away from the extremes of complete laissez-faire or

total nationalization was revealed by this comparison. Government regulation without direct management was the solution found by most of those questioned. This was true even in countries such as Britain that have had actual experience with the nationalization of key industries.

The backlog of experience

The substantial volume of research in other countries supported by U.S. business, government and academic sources, is building a rich accumulation of experience and data about how the dynamics of social and political change today affect U.S. business abroad. Emphasis on new research techniques, and a greater concern for historical and cultural factors peculiar to particular situations are giving depth and increased value to opinion polls. Modern research techniques familiar in the U.S.—probability sampling, depth interviewing, IBM tabulations and all the rest—are now in use throughout Western Europe, in much of Latin America and through the Middle East, the Orient and Pacific areas.

Carry out high standards

It has become possible to carry out comparative work of equally high standards in many countries simultaneously. The practice of financing cross-national studies on a cooperative basis has brought such research within the reach of the most modest organizational budgets.

It is true that good research is an indispensable tool of public relations. But sometimes dramatic events seem to paralyze the will to know; in the past there has been some tendency to feel that research is difficult or impossible in a "fast-changing situation." But more and more, U.S. business people are acting on the belief that they can't wait for a quiet decade to learn where they stand. ●

Daily Reminder

"One ought, every day at least, to hear a little song, read a good poem, see a fine picture, and if it were possible, to speak a few reasonable words."

—Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

Some Basic Attitudes —And Their Importance

By T. J. Ross

• Success in public relations is made up of many imponderables—a mixture of desire and wish, mental ability, experience, intellectual capacity, integrity, patience, skill in the mechanics of the business, and not a little bit of happenstance.

It is not a business about which one should pontificate. There are more experts *on* it than there are practitioners *in* it.

One of my more scholarly partners has reminded me that Coleridge had something to say about wisdom that remarkably parallels my late partner Ivy Lee's definition of public relations. Coleridge said that "Common sense in an uncommon degree is what the world calls wisdom."

Ivy Lee said: "Good public relations is applying common sense to the obvious."

Certainly, the business in which we are all engaged requires the application in generous measure of both wisdom and common sense, and the two are never very far apart.

At any rate, it is a pleasure to dis-

cuss the public relations business as I have enjoyed working in it for 39 years.

Ivy Lee—and staff

It was early in January, 1919, that I went to work in a firm then known as Lee, Harris, and Lee. The head of it was Ivy Lee. I was the staff.

In the years that have elapsed, no change has occurred in the fundamental principles of our business, but lots of things have occurred to make those principles better understood, more widely practiced, and more generally recognized as essential. Through depressions and booms, through hot and cold wars, through so-called new and fair deals, and into the age of atomic energy and space satellites, public relations and public relations people have grown in stature, in usefulness, and importance. And I believe this will continue to be true.

There is yet a great deal to be learned and to be understood about this business. Faulty definitions still plague us. Only recently one of our great newspapers referred to a "summit conference" of chiefs of state as a piece of public relations. The same term was applied to the advance publicity given to the unsuccessful launching of Vanguard. It is amusing, amazing, and sometimes a cause for dismay to realize how many and varied are the activities ascribed to and described as public relations.

Currently, an interesting phenomenon is taking place. Whether you call it public relations, publicity, propaganda, or unadulterated self-interest,

the fact is that nearly everybody and his uncle who have an axe to grind with the public seem to be hanging on to Sputnik's coat-tails, publicizing Sputnik's significance as related, of course, to the importance of their own cause.

I do not decry these efforts. This is a free country. And I am naive enough to believe increasingly in the simple idea that if people are given the facts, they will come to sound conclusions. Hiding the facts won't help us—in business or government.

What is happening in world news today testifies to the significant principle—which the Communists seem to recognize in their propaganda—that, in the Free World, public opinion is a force that must be recognized and reckoned with.

Temptation to comment

There is a great temptation to comment on how the Free World is doing that job, but I shall merely refer to two items pertinent to public relations principles: Mr. Dulles pointed out recently that one of the difficulties is what he called the capacity of the Russians to speak in different voices in different places. In other words, they have no need for integrity.

On the other hand, *apropos* the recent NATO meeting, Mr. Sulzberger in a *New York Times* column from Paris said that on the Allies' part there is a tendency to substitute double talk for plain language; that the Allies' coalition depends on public support, and that this must be more intelligent.

Continued on the Following Page

• T. J. Ross, senior partner of the firm of Ivy Lee and T. J. Ross, is above all things a "practical" man, as those who know "Tommy" Ross well understand. His own approach to some of the basic aspects of public relations is clearly presented in this article which is adapted from the text of a recent talk he gave before the New York Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. •

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Mr. Ross

gently cultivated than is now the case. However, I shall refrain from kibitzing in that department.

It occurs to me that perhaps it would be useful to make a few observations about those of us who work in public relations; about our attitude toward our work; and about our attitude toward the people with whom we work—particularly our managements, our clients, and the press.

Attitude toward our work

Our attitude toward our work should embrace fundamentally and primarily a conviction that what we do contributes to the good of our companies, our clients, our community, and our country—as well as to ourselves.

It calls for a wholesome, constructive, and creative approach to the problems and opportunities that come with our jobs. It presupposes that there is and should be nothing mysterious about it. It is based upon the premise that since what our employers do affects others, their right, their ability, and their success in manufacturing, selling, running a hospital, being a mayor or a governor—all require public approval.

This is a product of the kind of system in which we live. If those for whom we work are good citizens and the neighbors know it; if what they do is generally helpful and the neighbors know it . . . why then they are in a better position to go about their business freely and with the support of the neighbors.

It is true that the United States is becoming more and more integrated in its economy; that one activity more

and more is dependent upon and is helpful to other kinds of activity; that some of our economic units and the way they operate have brought tremendous growth; that the services of industry have reached out to benefit the world; that the means of communication today are swift and miraculous in their mass coverage. But such developments as these do not change the basic role of public relations. They make it more obviously needed and more critically important.

Conducting one's affairs in a manner to deserve public esteem and communicating actions to interested groups so that they will regard what is done with respect and confidence are two statements, so easy to make, so simple to state as to be dangerously deceptive. Understanding does not automatically produce ability.

In our attitude toward our work, it is essential that we realize the immensity of the task of first *earning* and then *winning* and then *holding* public confidence and respect. It is equally important to realize that there are virtually no formulae that automatically apply.

An economic unit may find it necessary to devote its public relations efforts largely in justifying itself socially, while a social unit, a hospital for example, may find it necessary to spend much of its time justifying itself economically.

A corporation has a great many elements with different and sometimes opposing aims and ends, and part of our job is to help keep all of the elements in a working, harmonious balance.

For the managers of an enterprise and the public relations practitioner, there are few certainties in reducing these principles to operating or decision levels.

Perfection in our practice, if ever attained, is a slow process. Perhaps we are never ideally equipped and there is a vast difference between stating a public relations aim and its accomplishment. We need industry, patience, and an inquiring mind.

Our attitude toward ourselves demands complete honesty, driving curiosity, the careful development of the ability to listen, to analyze and syn-



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thesize, of skill in writing, speaking, organizing. And perhaps first in importance, after integrity, is courage—for the work of effective public relations sometimes takes courage of the first order. Without an unusual amount of courage, public relations work may produce general unhappiness—if not a few ulcers.

If one would like to make a million dollars he had better go into another business. If anyone in the public relations business has made a million

dollars at it, I have not met him. Second, if one decides he wishes to lead a fairly routine life, spend a maximum amount of time with his family, work steady, regular hours, he had better look elsewhere.

I have also found it essential to be frank, especially with those whom we try to serve. No one is expected to know all the answers. It is good practice to admit this to oneself and to be frank with clients in the same respect.

Continued on the Following Page

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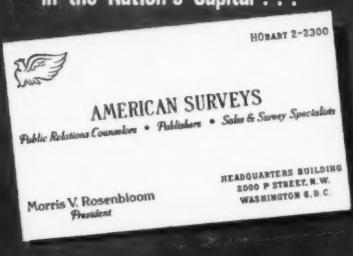
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Zeal for learning is important as is acceptance of the need to earn our way to the confidence of others, to which we aspire.

Genius, when it does exist in our field, as in so many others, is a rare gift. Application and years are essential ingredients to satisfactory performance. We learn as we go. We relate one experience to another. Learning requires listening. Good public relations men are good listeners.

Apparently some people in our business think there is some magical difference between what they term "counselling" firms and "operating" firms. There may be differences in the way we go at our work, but all of us, counsellors or operators, must possess all of the skills of our business. Anyone who thinks he can occupy some elevated seat among the elect of decision-makers and ignore the mechanics of our business—and that means, importantly, publicity—is making a grave mistake.

In our own firm, we have an axiom: We are all deckhands. Every man in our firm must know the techniques of communicating—and work at them.

It is well worth remembering that insofar as helping with decision-making goes, our efforts are confined to those areas of decision having public relations implications. We should guard against "the chairman of the board complex," the delusion that we have the answers to any and all problems that may face a corporate management.

Ours is essentially a staff function: We recommend. Others make the decisions. And, once a decision is made, unless it violates our moral or ethical precepts, it is our job to help make the decision work—whether or not it happens to be in agreement with our recommendation.

Two groups—clients and employers

Our day-to-day activities are carried out mainly in work with two groups. One of these is our clients or employers. The other is the media group—press, radio, television—those who disseminate news.

From time to time people say to me, "I understand you represent such

and such a corporation." I always say: "No, we work for them."

Effective relationships with corporations are not established overnight. They develop out of demonstrations of creativeness and competence in the mechanics of the business and in the judgment and knowledge found useful in the area of management decision. That is the only way I know to earn the opportunity to be called upon for help in that area.

Public relations firms are essentially outsiders. This is their strength and their limitation.

But for all of us in the business the role is a work role.

We are recommenders, not decision-makers.

Attitude toward the press

Our attitude toward the press, radio and television should be one of helpfulness, and it should find reflection in the advice we give our employers in dealing with these media. No favors from them. No favorites. No favoritism.

There is no rule-of-thumb in dealing with the press. Facts accurately and honestly given are the best assurance of the public's getting a wholesome picture of a corporation or an institution or an individual. No apology should be expected from the press for seeking information. The press' judgment as to what is news should be respected; at least, it should be recognized as a realistic fact to be dealt with.

As public relations-mindedness grows among business executives, few management people expect their public relations men to write the newspaper headlines, to get things in the papers or to keep them out. They recognize that if the press publishes unfavorable news about them or their company, it is better to look into the facts before condemning the press for fancied hostility. There are not many businessmen of stature who do not think they have enough to do to run their own businesses these days without taking on the job of telling newspapers how to run theirs.

Persuasion is a basic element of corporate operations. That is why good working relations with the press

or with any other group that makes a judgment is vital. That is why the more people get to know and understand a company and those who run it, the better position they are in to make an intelligent judgment and to avoid being the victim of some emotional approach. That is also why in public relations a company has to be everlasting at it.

One attitude toward what is called a "good press" should be that it is not brought about by news releases. A "good press" in the broader sense means that the sum total of the public's impression about a company is good and that the various media that are generally regarded as the press, have only "mirrored" the good acts and policy of the company.

A "good press" presupposes the elementary and simple theory that what people think is important; what they think of the product or service; of those who run the business; of management's intentions; of the way management treats people; and what they think of the policies and practices of the business—as people see them. In other words, people—all kinds of people—inside and outside the organization, have impressions that a company should be concerned with and interested to have favorable—by doing things that deserve good impressions.

As a practice, public relations has grown very fast; and the need for public relations has grown apace. The response to this need has been gratifying in terms of numbers of people. And, as might be expected, with this growth, there are those in the business who unfortunately spend a great deal of time being concerned over how they are regarded by others; who get outraged in the face of criticism or some occasional honest kidding.

Let us take our jobs seriously, but not ourselves too seriously. I believe that the public relations business today has more than its share of sound men and women, of up-and-coming bright young people. It is in good health. It has a promising future.

As we individually grow, and particularly as we individually learn, we shall achieve our fair measure of acceptance and esteem. ●

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ROPER — *Continued*

in effectiveness are due to the themes (their believability, interest, etc.) or to the execution of the themes (good photography, well written messages, etc.) we do not know, since this was outside the purposes of the study. But if that had been the purpose, the study—and the programs—could have been designed to separate theme from treatment.

This recital of the problems and pitfalls in measuring the effectiveness of a public relations campaign may, to some, seem like such a big series of chuck-holes that the road is impassable, and not worth trying. Actually the intention of relating these problems is quite different. It is twofold. First, to point out that this is not a six-lane thruway that is "a cinch" to drive—there are subtleties, there are problems that one ought to know if he is going to make the trip. But second, that a number of the chuck-holes have already been filled in and the road is a good deal easier to drive now—with safety—than it used to be. ●

FITZGERALD — *Continued*

itself, to really see clearly its present position and to start living up to its responsibilities towards the community."

And what part should public relations play in this awakening? "There is a slowly growing realization," he said, "of the need for a conscious public relations policy but I think the realization is growing too slowly. At the national level, those who are interested in the matter must do all possible to promote the knowledge and understanding of public relations. But it is not only a question of what can be done from a national level but largely an inter-European problem. The creation of some common market or markets will in itself raise new public relations problems as well as accentuating the need for solving the existing ones." ●

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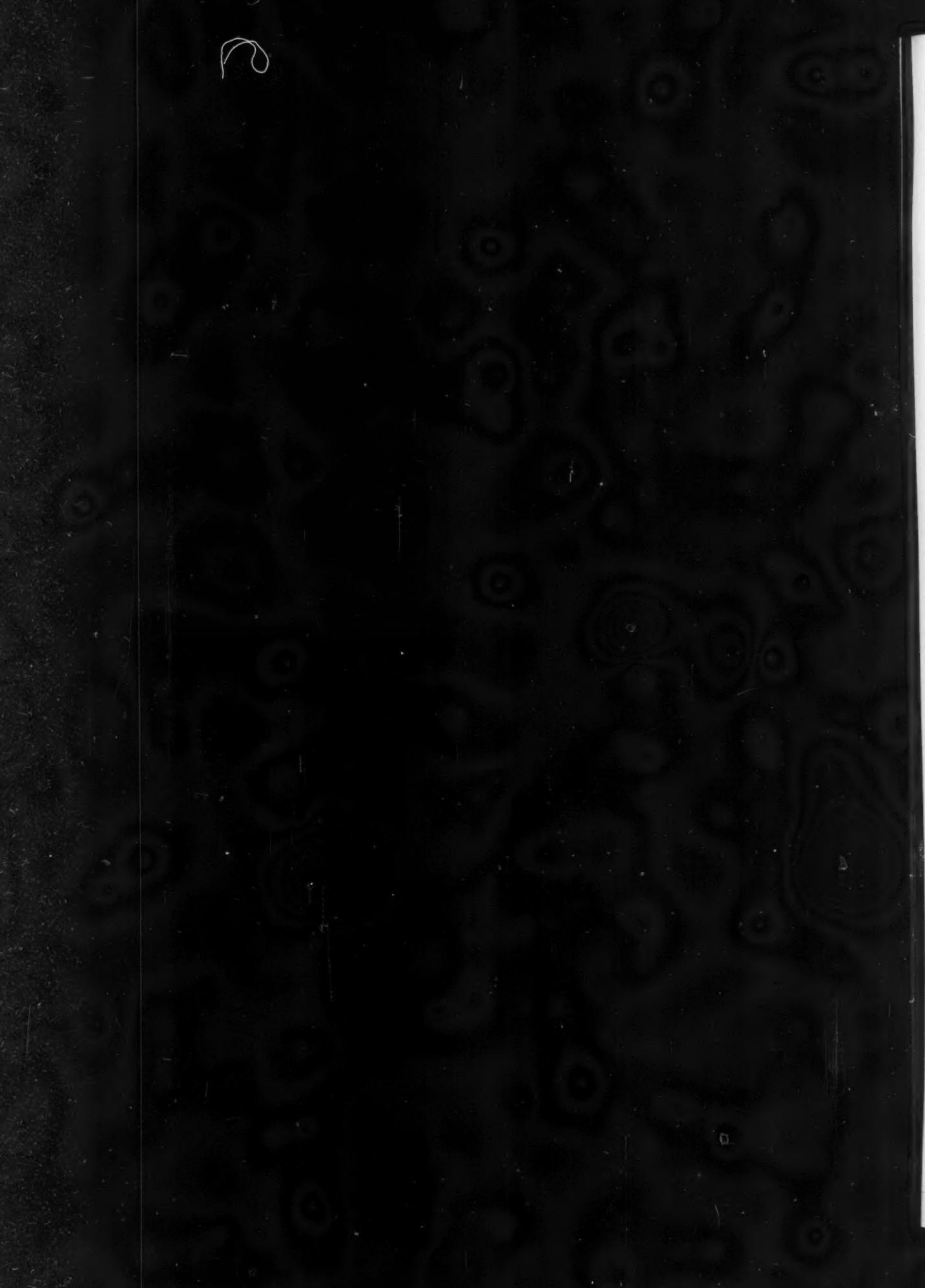
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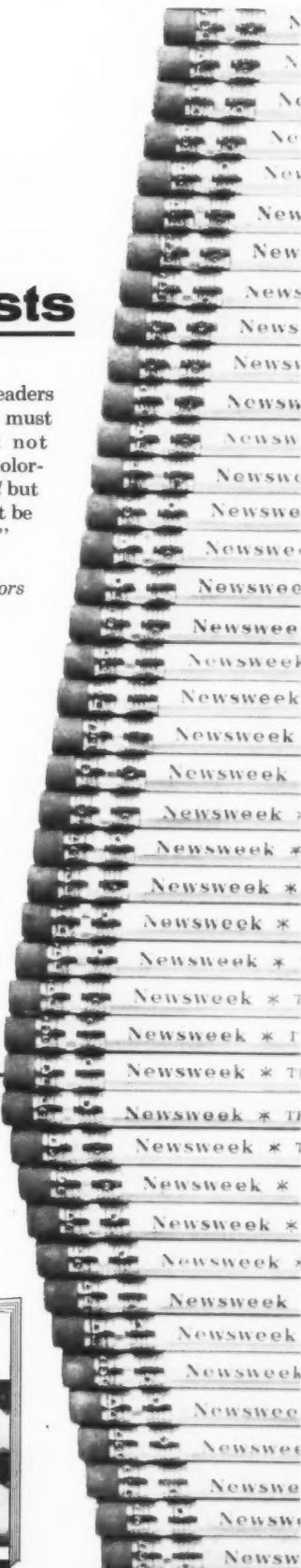


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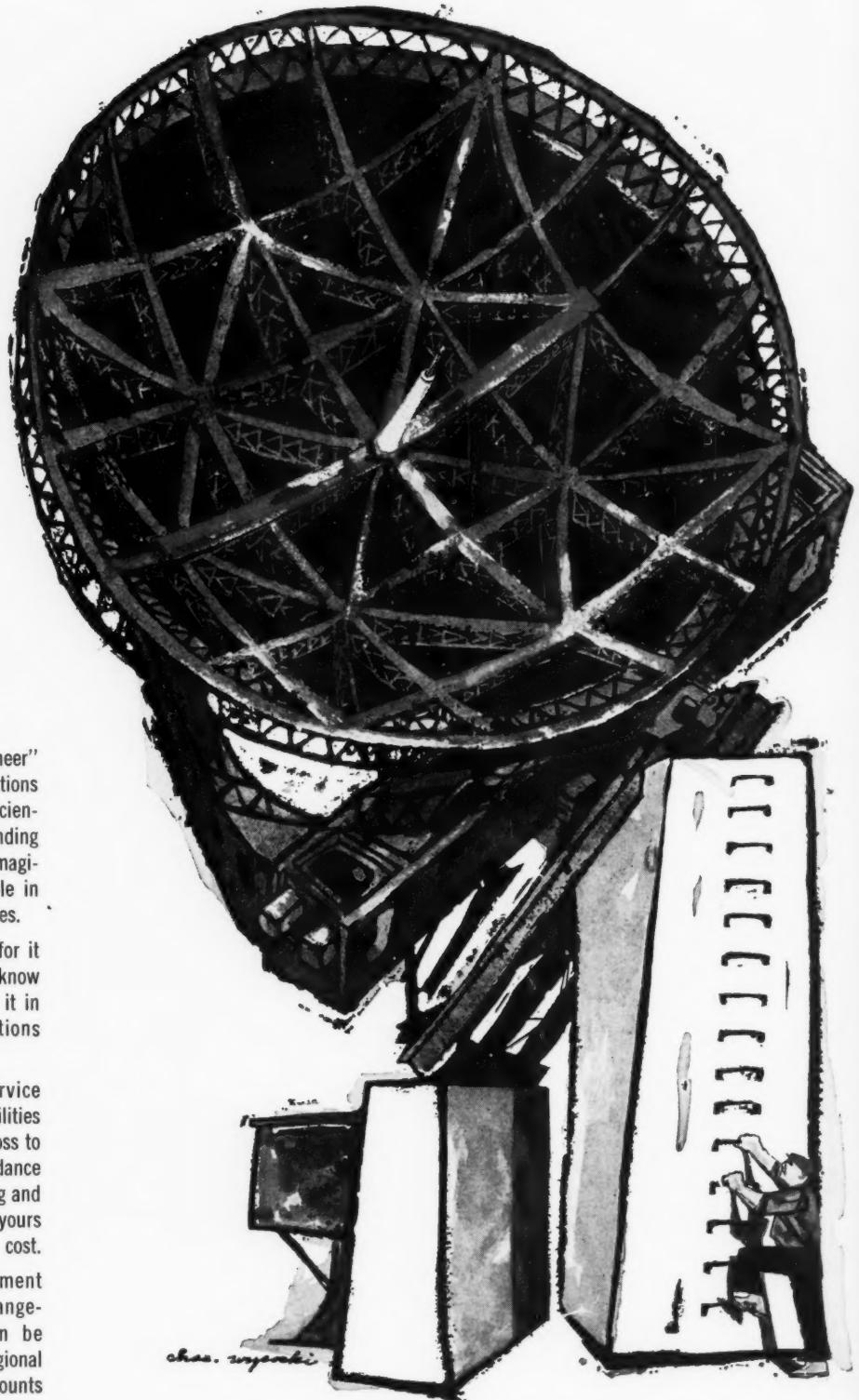
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